long-term cooperative action. For this purpose an Ad Hoc Working Group was established with a timetable of meetings to complete its work by the Conference of Parties (COP)-15 of the UNFCCC to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009. Parallel to this, the Ad Hoc Working Group under the Kyoto Protocol for comitments post 2012 is also to complete its work by the COP-15 in 2009.

Preservation of Kaziranga National Park

1450. KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) number of rhino killed at Kaziranga National Park during last four years;

(b) the measures taken to stop the rhino killing and to preserve the famous one-horn rhino;

(c) whether large area of the National Park is illegally occupied by some miscreants since a long period;

(d) whether most of the criminal activities in the Park continued with the active help of these illegal shelters; and

(e) whether Government would consider constituting high level enquiry for the various allegation in identical crisis of one-horn rhino at the Park and to tighten the security to protect and preserve the World Heritage of the Park?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) During the last four years, 34 Rhinos have been killed in Kaziranga National Park and adjacent areas.

(b) The steps taken by Government of India to protect wildlife and prevent poaching of wildlife including rhino are as under:

1. The Central Government has enacted the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to deal with the issues of wildlife crime. Stringent penalties are imposed on the offenders for the contravention of the provisions of the Act.
2. A network of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries has been set up across the country to protect wildlife.
3. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, with a network a five Regional and three Sub Regional Offices, has been set up to control wildlife crimes.
4. Financial support is being provided under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes—*Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, Project Tiger* and *Project Elephant*, to State/UT Governments for the conservation and development of wildlife and its habitats including those of Rhinos.
5. India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that regulates international trade in wildlife and its derivatives.

6. India has bilateral arrangements with China and Nepal on combating wildlife crime.

In addition, the State Government has also taken the following measures to protect wild animals and prevent poaching of rhino:

1. Intensive patrolling in sensitive areas and filling up of vacant posts.

2. Coordination with other law enforcement agencies.

3. Provision for arms & ammunition, and communication facilities.

4. Conducting nature awareness campaigns for the public.

5. Soliciting cooperation from the local communities for conservation.

6. Constitution of Expert Committee for rhino conservation.

(c) As reported by the State Government, 169 families continue to occupy part of the Sixth addition area of Kaziranga National Park. The eviction is pending because of an order of the Hon'ble Guwahati High Court on the notification of the Sixth addition area.

(d) No, Sir. There is no such report.

(e) There is no such proposal by the Central Government.

Tiger population

1451. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent official census shows only about 1400 tigers are left in India;

(b) whether this represents a sharp drop over the last decade which was being predicted and feared by wildlife experts although consistently denied by Government; and

(c) the steps Government and State Governments would take to ensure that the tiger population is stabilized and safeguarded so that it can increase in due course?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) As per the findings of the recent all India Estimation of tiger using refined methodology, the total country-level population of tiger is 1411 (mid value); the lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively. The details are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(b) The recent assessment of tiger population is based on determining spatial occupancy of tigers throughout potential tiger forests and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework. This assessment is not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks owing to several shortcomings in the latter. The new findings indicate a poor status of tiger population in areas outside tiger reserves and protected areas. The tiger population, by and large, in tiger reserves and protected areas of such States are viable, while requiring ongoing conservation efforts.